



## Guardian Ad Litem

### Guardian ad Litem Grant Program

State law directs the Idaho Supreme Court to serve as grant administrator for funds the Legislature appropriates to the guardian ad litem account (I.C. 16-1638). A guardian ad litem (GAL) is a person appointed to advocate for the best interests of a person in certain court proceedings. This grant program focuses particularly on funding guardians for child protection cases. The Court awards funding to organizations in each of the seven judicial districts to maintain GAL programs and train volunteers to serve as these advocates.

Beginning with the current fiscal year 2023 budget cycle, the Court is making some significant changes to the GAL Grant Program. These adjustments are being made to better align the Court's program with its statutory requirements as grant administrator and to formalize and strengthen the grant program.

- Any person, organization, corporation, or agency meeting the qualifications listed below can apply for the grant as permitted under [Idaho Code 16-1639\(1\)](#) [1]. Historically, the grant application has only been available to Idaho's Court Appointed Special Advocate programs.
- A newly appointed Grant Review Board will review grant applications and make funding recommendations to the Court.
- Grant eligibility and Grant Review Board procedures will now be formalized in court rule.

**To qualify**, applicants must demonstrate they can assemble and operate a guardian ad litem program within their judicial district as provided in Idaho Code [16-1632](#) [2], [16-1633](#) [3] and [Idaho Juvenile Rule 35](#) [4]. This includes:

- Recruiting, backgrounding, and training volunteer guardians ad litem.
- Providing a guardian for each child brought within the purview



of Idaho's Child Protective Act.

- Conducting an independent factual investigation of the circumstances of each child, providing a report on such to the court, and continuing to advocate for the child's best interests throughout the proceedings.
- Maintaining required training, confidentiality, financial principles and other practices required in the above statutes and rules.

A full summary of requirements can also be [found here](#) [5].

Each year, GAL organizations interested in receiving funding will submit their applications to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). After careful review by the GAL Grant Review Board, the applications are then forwarded to the Court with recommendations for funding. The Court makes final funding decisions.

The AOC administers the money to the successful applicants monthly, while monitoring each program's progress and use of funds through monthly progress and financial reports

The application period for FY2023 is now closed. Applicants wishing to seek funding should check back here later this year for instructions on how to apply for FY2024 funding.

If you have any questions or would like to speak to someone about this program, please contact Chelsea Hiatt, GAL grant specialist, at [chiatt@idcourts.net](mailto:chiatt@idcourts.net) [6].

## Links

- [Idaho Code 16-1632 to 16-1639 \(guardians ad litem\)](#) [1]
- [Idaho Court Administrative Rule 91](#) [7]
- [GAL Grant Program Policies and Procedures](#) [8]

**Source URL:** <https://isc.idaho.gov/Guardian-ad-Litem>

## Links

- [1] <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title16/t16ch16/sect16-1639/>
- [2] <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title16/t16ch16/sect16-1632/>
- [3] <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title16/t16ch16/sect16-1633/>
- [4] <https://isc.idaho.gov/ijr35>
- [5] [https://isc.idaho.gov/GAL/Files/GAL\\_Grant\\_Policies\\_\\_Procedures.pdf](https://isc.idaho.gov/GAL/Files/GAL_Grant_Policies__Procedures.pdf)
- [6] <mailto:chiatt@idcourts.net>
- [7] <https://isc.idaho.gov/gal/files/Adoption-of-ICAR-91.pdf>



[8] [https://isc.idaho.gov/GAL/Files/GAL\\_Grant\\_Policies\\_&\\_Procedures-Oct-2021.pdf](https://isc.idaho.gov/GAL/Files/GAL_Grant_Policies_&_Procedures-Oct-2021.pdf)